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Illinois Training Farm

FOR WOMEN

OF THE

WOMAN'S LAND ARMY
OF AMERICA, Inc.

Libertyville, Ill.

FIRST ANNUAL REPORT

1918

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REPORT

of the

Illinois Training Farm

1918

Mr. W. V. B. Ames is a farmer who believes in woman on the farm. Last April, when the Land Army Committee in Illinois was formed, he loaned to the Board his farm of 200 acres with house and new cement cow stable, outbuildings, tool and implement equipment, 18 cows and 187 chickens.

It was found that many people believed in training women for the farm; people, too, who are handling business propositions. When the project was discussed with them they proved their faith by generous gifts.

The 200 acres of the ILLINOIS TRAINING FARM FOR WOMEN are northwest of Libertyville, an hour's ride from Chicago. The office is at 112 W. Adams Street, and there, approximately, 1300 girls who wanted to discuss farm work have been interviewed. Sixty-four of these girls have been trained on the farm and have received their brassards. Of these 75% were college women; 15% professional women and 10% women of leisure, or homemakers. The ages ranged from 16 to 53 years.

The women have plowed with horses and tractor; planted, cultivated, made hay, gathered crops, filled silos, raised horses and cows, drained land and helped construct buildings. They have raised chickens, tended bees and done dairy work, including butter and cheese making. In May they set out about 2,000 tomato and 5,000 cabbage plants; seeded 70 acres of hay, 3 acres of alfalfa, 22 acres of corn, 11 acres of oats, 7 acres of barley, 2 acres of wheat, 3 acres of sweet corn and 4 acres of potatoes. And this is just a beginning!

The creamery report for a month and a half shows as follows:

144 lbs.	cottage cheese.....	.35	50.40
9 "	cream cheese	1.00	9.00
2 "	devonshire cream	1.00	2.00
97 "	butter70	67.90
20 qt.	buttermilk20	4.00
Total			133.30

Dairy report:

24,592 lbs. of milk..... 819.73

During thrashing time there was an interchange of labor between the neighboring farmers and the TRAINING FARM, and as many as ten girls were sent to help in this work. They shocked corn, helped thrash, filled silos and pitched hay. When the girls actually replaced men in this work they received the same wages as men and when their strength was not equal to that of the men their time was paid for according to the amount of work they were able to do.

When the War Exposition was started the labor could not be obtained to level the ground for the Exposition. The Director of the Grounds, knowing that our girls had run a tractor, called upon us to help them out in this emergency. Four of our girls worked three days leveling the grounds, running a tractor and scraper. They also assisted in pulling heavy loads out of the mud.

The Land Army Committee also sent workers to a few of the farms in the State under conditions however which differed somewhat from the Farm Unit work of the Eastern States.

Emphasis is laid upon the importance of the women farmers understanding the care of the human animal as well as the other live stock. How can the garden crops be most appetizingly utilized and the surplus marketed or preserved? What by-products and substitutes can be devised? Here is room for thought and ingenuity which bring a double harvest, satisfaction and money. The most successful substitute experiment this Fall was the green tomato mincemeat. 138 cans of this has been sold at 75c a quart, equalling \$103.50.

On September 17th Governor Lowden accepted an invitation to visit the Farm. There was a gathering of agricultural experts, dairy men and neighboring farmers to whom luncheon was served.

It was on this occasion that the students at the Farm who had completed their service were awarded the brassards of the WOMAN'S LAND ARMY.

The live stock must have comfortable quarters, clean and hygienic, and maintaining such conditions for the human animals is part of the woman farmer's scheme. At the TRAINING FARM she is taught the proper elements of a meal and the quickest and cheapest way to prepare it. Knowledge always makes work easier, more interesting. She has modern ways of keeping clean and well, in which running water, rugs instead of carpets, a furnace, and windows which open play a part. She knows how to make house plants blossom in winter and can stencil a curtain border. Her province is the Halloween games, the barn dance, harvest home supper and the quieter times, too, when Whittier's "Snow Bound" may be read aloud to express every one's feeling about their new white world; or, when the season changes, Lowell's "Day in June", or O. Henry's latest story.

Winter life on the ILLINOIS TRAINING FARM FOR WOMEN is under way now. The house has a furnace and plumbing. The House Mother is listing the home canned goods and is ready to teach the girls how to combine them with other foods in attractive menus. With systematised hours of help from the girls, she prepares the meals and keeps the house in order. The Farm store closet holds canned beans, lima beans, peas, tomatoes, corn, beets, chard ribs, okra, spinach; besides dried beans, peas, corn, tomatoes and various greens.

Miss Ransford is the Resident instructor in charge of the Dairy. She is a graduate of Kilmarnock college in Scotland, and recently a teacher at the Michigan Agricultural College and a instructor of the best ability. Nowhere in the country can one get better training in dairy work. The

course is six weeks and is continued at the Farm throughout the winter. There is also a Saturday morning course of four to six lessons for High School girls of Lake County, practical, but not so detailed as the longer course. We have now 11 cows, 12 calves and 285 chickens. A dairy woman caring for the milk of 6 to 20 cows gets approximately \$40.00 a month and her board and lodgings, the respect of herself and her clients and a healthy and independent life thrown in. The life is healthy, not only in body but in mind. She is doing something for the world, she is dealing with realities and necessities and her associates are earnest, intelligent people.

These dairy courses with poultry work, and the care of live stock, repairing tools and machinery, keep the student farmers busy during the winter. An Entertainment Committee consists of a Board Member and the resident President of the Self-Government Association. Pleasant plans are made for Sundays and Mid-week evenings.

The dairy and poultry course takes one month; also cow testing. For the General Farming course about one year is needed.

There is a possibility of the Training Farm being duplicated. It appeals strongly to our agricultural authorities and educators. Its future is assured either as an individual unit or as a part of some larger educational enterprise.

Mary K. Nelson,
Corresponding Secretary, pro tem.

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